What's in a Name? Would a Rose by Any Other Name Really Smell as Sweet?¹

Stephanie J. Willbanks

INTRODUCTION

Would you dance with a gorilla? I don't know that anyone would but surely you would read an article entitled "Dancing with the Gorilla." I discovered this article when I was a research assistant after my first year in law school. As I now recall, my law professor was working on an article about jury nullification. Of course, "Dancing with the Gorilla" had nothing to do with juries or their nullification but the title was so intriguing that I read the first paragraph of it.

This was apparently a transforming experience as the titles of my own articles reflect, although I have avoided reference to gorillas or other wild beasts.³ It was while I was pondering the title to my most recent article that I decided to do some research into article titles. I did not find very much. There are the

Stephanie J. Willbanks is Professor of Law at Vermont Law School. My profound gratitude to Julie Graves Krishnaswami and Laura Gillen for their incredible assistance when I began the research for this article. Julie is now Head of Reference Services, Lillian Goldman Law Library at Yale Law School. Laura Gillen, having served for 26 years as the premier faculty secretary, is now retired.

- "What's in a name? That which we call a rose / By any other name would smell as sweet." William Shakespeare, Romeo and Juliet, Act 2, sc. 2, available at http://shakespeare. mit.edu/romeo_juliet/romeo_juliet.2.2.html. The inclusion of "really" in the title is reminiscent of the Geico television commercials that asked rhetorical questions. See GEICO advertising campaigns, Wikipedia, available at http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/GEICO-advertising-campaigns.
- 2. Eugene I. Lambert, Dancing with the Gorilla, 30 Food Drug Cosm. L.J. 410 (1975). His is not the only article title to reference dancing with a, or the, gorilla. *See also* Oscar Roos, Dancing with a gorilla?, 82 Law Inst. J. 46 (2008).
- 3. See Stephanie J. Willbanks, Taxing Once, Taxing Twice, Taxing Joint Tenants (Again) at Death Isn't Nice, 9 U. Pitt. Tax Rev. 1 (2011); Stephanie J. Willbanks, Parting is Such Sweet Sorrow, But Does It Have to be So Complicated? Transmission of Property at Death in Vermont, 29 Vt. L. Rev. 895 (2005); W. Leslie Peat & Stephanie J. Willbanks, A Page of Logic is Worth a Volume of History: The Treatment of Retained Interests Under the Federal Estate and Gift Tax Statutes, 8 Va. Tax Rev. 639 (1989); Stephanie J. Willbanks, Does It Pay to Kill Your Mother? The Effect of a Criminal Acquittal in a Subsequent Civil Proceeding to Disqualify the Slayer, 16 Conn. L. Rev. 29 (1983).

"Dunn-In Awards," an eclectic collection of bad law review articles, familiar to law librarians.⁴ There is also "A Compendium of Clever and Amusing Law Review Writings: An Idiosyncratic Bibliography of Miscellany with In Kind Annotations Intended as a Humorous Diversion for the Gentle Reader."⁵

As the two articles about dancing with gorillas demonstrate, the relationship between an article title and its content may be purely coincidental. The first article discusses doing business with the Food and Drug Administration while the second article suggests ways that lawyers in Victoria, British Columbia, might use the Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities in criminal litigation. Both do, however, make the same point: it is the gorilla that controls the dance. The articles referenced below under each heading have even less in common. A catchy title might not ensure that an article is read but most authors appear to believe that it might. After all, who wouldn't want to read "Dancing with the Gorilla"?

The following bibliography is an eclectic collection of titles. It is not an empirical study. I have not been collecting titles for the past thirty-five years or even the past five years. I have not sought out the longest title or the shortest. I have not focused on the good, the bad or the ugly. I have not made any attempt to be comprehensive. I have not even read the articles. I hope you will enjoy this diversion from whatever else you were doing when you stumbled upon this.

- 4. See, e.g., Donald J. Dunn, The Best of the Bad: The Sixteenth Annual Dunn-In Awards, 22 LLNE News 22, 2002-2003, available at http://www.aallnet.org/chapter/llne/LLNENews/PDF/2002v22n4.pdf. Donald J. Dunn served as the law library director at the Western New England College School of Law from 1973 until 1996 when he became first the interim dean and then the dean. He returned to the law library in 2002, but then left to become dean at the University of La Verne College of Law. Roy M. Mersky, Memorial: Donald J. Dunn (1945-2008), 100 Law Libr. J. 601 (2008).
- 5. Thomas E. Baker, A Compendium of Clever and Amusing Law Review Writings: An Idiosyncratic Bibliography of Miscellany with In Kind Annotations Intended as a Humorous Diversion for the Gentle Reader, 51 Drake L. Rev. 1005 (2002).
- See Eugene I. Lambert, Dancing with the Gorilla, 30 Food Drug Cosm. L.J. 410 (1975); Roos, supra note 2.
- 7. See Lambert, supra note 2.
- 8. See Roos, supra note 2.
- 9. The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly is a 1966 "spaghetti western" directed by Sergio Leone and featuring Clint Eastwood, Lee Van Cleef and Eli Wallach. The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly (United Artists 1966).

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VII. Observations

Because there was no rhyme nor reason to the selections, it is not possible to draw any conclusions. At the beginning of this project there were far more titles and categories. Most had to be rejected in the interest of time and space. As Justice Andrews said in his dissent in *Palsgraf*, "We may regret that the line was drawn just where it was, but drawn somewhere it had to be." ¹⁰